

BOOK NOTICE

Butterflies. A Handbook of the Butterflies of the United States, Complete for the Region North of the Potomac and Ohio Rivers and East of the Dakotas. By Ralph W. Macy and Harold H. Shepard. The University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1941. Cloth, 6 × 9 inches, viii + 248 p. Four color plates and 52 text illustrations. \$3.50.

The introduction to this book is worth reading for it gives an informative, general survey of present-day knowledge of butterflies and the methods pursued in their study. A map defines the general area considered and a map of Minnesota, showing life zones, is valuable because of the many Minnesota records listed at the end of each description.

As the book is written for the general use of the many people who are interested in natural history, but who are not trained taxonomists, the whole presentation is very simple and avoids technicalities. Thus the systematic account starts with a short family key. In the text each family is briefly defined and followed by a key to the species. Four families, Danaidæ, Satyridæ, Nymphalidæ and Libytheidæ are handled in one key which is a successful solution for the few species included. In presenting the Hesperiidæ, the subfamily Pyrginæ has a key to the genera with further keys to the species. The Hesperiinæ are divided into four generic groups by key and each group subdivided to genera, and where needed to species by keys. The scheme is comprehensible to the amateur and makes accurate determination of the northeastern species possible.

The index includes both popular and scientific names and each description of a species is headed by the scientific name followed by the popular name. The references to the literature are confined to the original descriptions and readily obtainable popular works. Information on life history briefly describes egg, larva and pupa, mentioning food plants and habits.

There are 45 text figures, principally of Hesperiidæ and four colored plates showing 29 species in reduced size. The plates seem somewhat of an afterthought for they are not referred to in the text.

The book is a useful addition to popular butterfly literature. Its claim: "Complete for the Region" is unfortunate for three species distinctly from the region are omitted.—W. P. Comstock.